

## Unit 4 Lesson 3 Eating for a Healthy Heart

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a U. S. government agency that makes sure foods are safe, wholesome and honestly labeled.

### Eat Healthy to Help Prevent Heart Disease

What kills Americans most?

**Heart disease.** It's the No. 1 cause of death in this country.

You can lower your chances of getting heart disease. One way is to choose foods carefully. For a healthy heart, eat:

- less fat
- less sodium
- fewer calories
- more fiber

#### Eat less fat

Some fats are more likely to cause heart disease. These fats are usually found in foods from animals, such as meat, milk, cheese, and butter. They also are found in foods with palm and coconut oils.

#### Eat less of these foods.

#### Eat less sodium

**Eating less sodium** can help lower some people's blood pressure. This can help reduce the risk of heart disease.

Sodium is something we need in our diets, but most of us eat too much of it. Much of the sodium we eat comes from salt we add to our food at the table or that food companies add to their foods. So, avoid adding salt to foods at the table.

#### Eat fewer calories

When we eat more calories than we need, we gain weight. Being overweight can cause heart disease.

When we **eat fewer calories** than we need, we lose weight.

#### Eat more fiber

**Eating fiber** from fruits, vegetables and grains may help lower your chances of getting heart disease.

## Diet Tips for a Healthy Heart

- Eat a diet low in saturated fat, especially animal fats and palm and coconut oils.
- Add foods to your diet that are high in monounsaturated fats, such olive oil, canola oil, and seafood.
- Eat foods containing polyunsaturated fats found in plants and seafood. Safflower oil and corn oil are high in polyunsaturated fats.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
- Maintain or improve your weight.
- Eat plenty of grain products, fruits and vegetables.

Eating this way does not mean you have to spend more money on food. You can still eat many foods that cost the same or less than what you're eating now.

### here's how:

Instead of ...	Do this ...
whole or 2 percent milk, and cream	Use 1 percent or skim milk.
fried foods	Eat baked, steamed, boiled, broiled, or microwaved foods.
cooking with lard, butter, palm and coconut oils, and shortenings made with these oils	Cook with these oils only: corn, safflower, sunflower, soybean, cottonseed, olive, canola, peanut, sesame, or shortenings made from these oils.
smoked, cured, salted and canned meat, poultry and fish	Eat unsalted fresh or frozen meat, poultry and fish.
fatty cuts of meat, such as prime rib	Eat lean cuts of meat or cut off the fatty parts of meat.
one whole egg in recipes	Use two egg whites.
sour cream and mayonnaise	Use plain low-fat yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese, or low-fat or "light" sour cream and mayonnaise.
sauces, butter and salt	Season vegetables, including potatoes, with herbs and spices.
regular hard and processed cheeses	Eat low-fat, low-sodium cheeses.
crackers with salted tops	Eat unsalted or low-sodium whole-wheat crackers.

regular canned soups, broths and bouillons and dry soup mixes	Eat sodium-reduced canned broths, bouillons and soups, especially those with vegetables.
white bread, white rice, and cereals made with white flour	Eat whole-wheat bread, brown rice, and whole-grain cereals.
salted potato chips and other snacks	Choose low-fat, unsalted tortilla and potato chips and unsalted pretzels and popcorn.

## Tips for Losing Weight

- Eat smaller portions.
- Avoid second helpings.
- Eat less fat by staying away from fried foods, rich desserts, and chocolate candy. Foods with a lot of fat have a lot of calories.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.

Eat "low-calorie" foods, such as low-calorie salad dressings.

## Read the food label

The food label can help you eat less fat and sodium, fewer calories and more fiber.

## Look for certain words on food labels.

The words can help you spot foods that may help reduce your chances of getting heart disease. FDA has set rules on how these words can be used. So, if the label says "low-fat," the food must be low in fat.

## Read the Food Label

Look at the side or back of the package.

Here, you will find "**Nutrition Facts.**" Look for these words:

- **Total fat**
- **Saturated fat**
- **Cholesterol**
- **Sodium**

Look at the **%Daily Value** listed next to each term. If it is 5% or less for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium, the food is low in these nutrients. That's good. It means the food fits in with a diet that may help reduce your chances of getting heart disease.

## Eating for a Healthy Heart

You can lower your chances of getting heart disease. One way is through your diet.

Remember:

- Eat less fat.
- Eat less sodium.
- Reduce your calories if you're overweight.
- Eat more fiber.
- Eat a variety of foods.
- Eat plenty of bread, rice, and cereal. Also eat lots of vegetables and fruit.
- If you drink beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

### Here are some other things you can do to keep your heart healthy:

Ask your doctor to check your cholesterol level. This is done with a blood test. The test will show the amount of cholesterol in your blood with a number. Below 200 is good. The test will also show the amount of "good" and "bad" cholesterol. Your doctor can tell you more about what these numbers mean.

If your cholesterol is high, your doctor may suggest diet changes, exercise, or drugs to bring it down.

Regular exercise--like walking, swimming, or gardening--can help you keep your weight and cholesterol down.

Source: *Down Home Healthy: Family Recipes of Black American Chefs Leah Chase and Johnny Rivers*, National Institutes of Health

### For More Information

If you have questions, you can call your nearest FDA office. Look for the number in the blue pages of the telephone book.

Or, call FDA's toll-free Food Information line at 1-888-SAFEFOOD (1-888-723-3366).

Or look for FDA on the World Wide Web at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov).

For help with your diet, see your doctor or a registered dietitian or nutritionist.